

We claim:

priority 3/31/99

1. A method comprising:
receiving an indication of a second telephone that is authorized to monitor a first telephone; C. 7, 5-10
receiving a request from the second telephone to monitor the first telephone; (C. 5, 13-15)
receiving a status from the first telephone; and (C. 5, 44-55)
sending the status to the second telephone. (C. 5, 56-67)
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
storing a first identifier that identifies the first telephone and a second identifier that identifies the second telephone; and
sending the first identifier to the second telephone. *Indemnity*
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
verifying good standing of a customer account of the second telephone. *10/1/99*
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving a request to register the second telephone, wherein the request includes a digital signature and a second identifier that identifies the second telephone; *10/3*
registering the second telephone; and
registering the first telephone.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the receiving step further includes the steps of:
receiving a request for a second network address and a security clearance from the second telephone.

6. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of registering the first telephone further includes the steps of:

issuing the first telephone a first network address; and
storing the second network address and the corresponding first identifier.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of registering the second telephone further includes the steps of:

verifying the digital signature;
issuing the second telephone a second network address; and
storing the second network address and the corresponding second identifier.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

sending the first identifier to the second telephone for storage and display. (5, 20-23)

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a request includes receiving a request to notify the second telephone when a status change of a predetermined condition of the first telephone occurs.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising:

storing the status change of the predetermined condition with the corresponding first identifier and the corresponding second identifier.

11. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining if the second telephone is authorized to receive the status of the first telephone.

12. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

encrypting the status with a public key before sending the status to the second telephone.

13. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

recording transmission of the status to the second telephone's customer account.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the status indicates whether the first telephone is off-hook. *Fig 2*

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the status indicates whether a user of the first telephone has entered at least one predetermined DTMF code into the telephone. *C.S. 3038*

16. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
receiving an acknowledgment from the second telephone of a successful transmission of the status.

17. A computer programmed to perform the method of claim 1.

18. A computer-readable storage medium encoded with instructions for directing a processor to perform the method of claim 1. *or 1*